

342 raised. An old shoe is also generally found along with the iron and
 789 stones under the floor. Occasionally bits of dried *tulasi* plant (*Ocimum*
 [824] *sanctum*) are also scattered about the floor or again a bunch of *tulasi*
 may be tied at the base of the central pole. This pole stuck in the
 centre of the house being built is not a part of the permanent construc-
 tion, but is a device to render the building work satisfactory and
 protect the home from demons taking possession of it while in the
 process of construction. On the pole can be seen hanging a basket
 and in this basket were found pieces of iron and tin, and bits of the
 outer *lepoed*¹ covering of another house. It may be taken from the
 walls of a house in which a happily married and prosperous family lived.
 [337] In an earthen pot placed on the floor there was a yellowish liquid. The
 builder told us that this was water, but it had the appearance of cow's
 urine, although this could not be confirmed. Occasionally there is a
 [778] sign of a little shrine about the construction somewhere, which shows
 782 signs of the presentation of the *hom* offering.

342 The inner floor of the house will be filled in and packed down
 after the walls are up. In dwellings of good construction the floor of the
 interior of the house should be higher than the veranda floor, and the
 veranda floor should, in turn, be higher than that of the courtyard.
 Kol houses have no windows, and the door-ways are low. On enter-
 [732] ing one must bow, or even get down on hands and knees. Bowing as
 [828] one enters is said to be a method of showing respect to the household
 deities. Windows might let in evil forces, hence none is included.

Women may aid in building the house, but their work is limited
 342 to assisting in building the walls and floor of the house by bringing
 462 the earth or water, mixing them and helping to place the mud in the
 proper place. They take no part, however, in the construction of the
 roof. This is not a woman's job, and for a woman to get upon a roof
 [562] is taboo—a thing that requires punishment or a fine.
 784

Kols are able to construct the whole house. If the roof is to
 342 be of grass, the grass is brought from the forests, and *kusa* (*Poa*
 [824] *cynosuroides*) and *duda* (*Agrostis linearis*) are generally used. If
 tiles are utilized, cheap country tiles are obtained from the village
 [323] potter. The Kol puts the tiles on the roof himself. The only
 [335] thing which he cannot make is the door and frame, but these
 may be bought quite cheaply in the markets or may be made for him
 by the village carpenter. They are set in the opening left for the door,
 and the mud is packed in about them. There is usually but one door
 to a house. The more primitive types of houses so common among

¹ See Glossary, Appendix VI, for meanings of Vernacular terms.

stand in the stream up to their hips with their saris still draped around them, and if there is a possibility of men in the vicinity, also cover their heads. Water is poured over them or they may immerse themselves. Ordinarily no soap is used, in fact the use of soap is not common to village people, though it is not unknown. After the bath the women come to the shore and by first draping a fresh sari about them slip off the wet one without exposing themselves. They do not dry themselves with any towel, though the hair may be rubbed dry with some cloth. Oil is sometimes applied to the body. They next wash the sari they have removed, which is done by beating it with a stick on a flat stone. After being wrung out it is taken home to be hung up somewhere about the house to dry and be ready for use the next day. The sari put on at the time of the morning bath is constantly worn until the next bath. The bather may now take a bit to eat, or occasionally she may have her morning meal, though it is more usual for her to wait until the men have been fed or she takes what is left. The husband usually returns from work about mid-day and gets his meal; but if the work is heavy and he must be there, she will take it out to the fields to him, where he will eat it and, after a short rest, resume his work. If the work is pressing, she may remain to assist him, though she should never touch the plough. She may reap, weed, and thresh, and she carries home the rice and wheat which has been threshed. During the hotter months field work begins before daylight, and the men are back by ten o'clock. In the threshing season the work continues steadily throughout the day, for that is the time when the hot winds are active and the chaff is easily separated. The men may bathe on their way back at noon, or in the evening before their evening meal. If they return from the fields at dusk, the evening meal is usually not taken till after eight o'clock. Unless there is some social event such as preparations for a wedding or a tribal feast, or, perhaps a religious ceremony, the Kols are asleep by about nine at night. On religious and social occasions, however, the whole night may be spent in singing, watching the women dance and chatting. The social events occur usually in the slack season and work is not interfered with; but under industrial conditions there is a limit to night operations, and the singing is usually over by midnight.

The children have their tasks too. The boys, as soon as they are old enough, herd cattle and goats in the forest, gather sticks, leaves and roots, and run errands for their mothers. The girls assist their mothers in the home, gather cow-dung for use as fuel and as plaster for the walls and floor.

The main variations of this routine are occasioned by social

same as Borowar on our list; Bin and Binj are probably the same, and Harwariya may have become Garhvariya; the ploughman becoming the fortress-dweller.

Russell and Hiralal¹ state that they found the subcastes noted below, but their results appear to be based on materials gathered from the eastern edge of the Central Provinces. It will be noted that there are points of agreement and disagreement between their list and ours: Rautia, Rantele, Thakuriya, Kagwaria, Desaha, Bharia, Savar and Khairwar. They also include as "totemistic septs" the following: Bargaiyan, Kathotia, Katharia, Kumhra and Bhuwar.

1. *Rautiya*. This designation is believed to be derived from the word Rawat meaning "a prince," and as such may be traced to some ancient landholding or warrior group among the Kols in centuries past. This group claims to be the highest of the Kol *kurhis* and such assertions were usually not disputed by either Thakuriyas or others in joint group discussions; although on one or two occasions it was controverted as recorded under the Thakuriya (*vide p. 41*). Almost without exception the Rautiyas make use of the Brahmin priest at the time of wedding, and of the Hindu *sai* or barber, and the *dhobi* or washerman in certain ceremonies connected with birth and death. Not to do this would be to sin against social conventions; yet in one or two cases we were told that if a Rautiya is too poor to employ a Brahmin he might make other arrangements. This probably means that far back in their history they attended to such matters themselves, but have now become Hinduized and feel unable to act for themselves. Rautiyas made the claim that they move freely among Hindus and are recognized by them in a manner that other Kol *kurhis* are not. While the group is theoretically endogamous, hypergamy is occasionally practised with the Thakuriyas. This is probably a relic from the time when intermarriage was common, but the process of Hinduization has now stabilized the *kurhis*. They admit that if necessary Thakuriya girls may be married to Rautiya boys, but deny that they ever give their girls in marriages to Thakuriyas. If a *swasaha* Rautiya—those whom perform marriage without the help of a Brahmin—has an eligible son they would give their daughter to him in marriage only if it is agreed that the Brahmin priest and the *sai*, will officiate in the regular way.

Rautiyas have a very definite taboo in the case of the horse. Horse manure is absolutely forbidden to be touched. There are several curious stories that came to our attention. One of them is that in the dim ages past Bhagawan gave the Kols the gift of a horse. In a few

¹ Russell and Hiralal, *Op. Cit.*, Vol. III, Article Kol.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE : MAIN DIVISIONS OR KURNIS

35

days it grew to be so tall that no Kol could mount it. They did not know what to do, and the only thing that they could think of (being jungle people) was to take an axe and shorten its legs. This they were about to do when the horse disappeared. A variant story of the above is that the horse given by Bhagawan had a peculiar power which made it impossible for Kols to ride upon it. At one moment it would be so small that it would run right out from under the man who was riding it, leaving him standing in the way; on other occasions it became so tall that no one could climb upon it. Once, when it was in the latter form, a Kol in desperation took his axe and started to cut short the legs of the horse, but before he could actually do this it was snatched away by Bhagawan. Since then Kols have never used horses, for they were "deceived" by Bhagawan. They claim that they will never touch the dung of the horse, "not even if we are beaten." They have no taboos in the case of cow dung.

The Bharias, a tribe of cultivators, probably Mundas, found mostly in Jubbulpore district have a similar story which is recorded by Russell and Hiralal as follows:

They have an aversion for the horse and will not remove its dung. To account for this they tell a story to the effect that in the beginning God gave them a horse to ride and fight upon. But they did not know how to mount the horse because it was so high. The wisest man among them proposed to cut notches in the side of the animal by which they could climb up, and this they did. But God, when he saw it, was very angry with them, and ordered that they should never be soldiers, but should be given a winnowing fan and broom to sweep the grain out of the grass and make their livelihood in that way.¹

Some Rautiyas also have a taboo against the use of mattresses or quilts made from pieces of old clothes. They also seem to have a very definite taboo against the use of gold as an ornament, although it was often stated that this custom is passing away. It is not that they cannot touch gold, for this they may do, but they should not wear it on their persons. The reason for this goes back to Sheori the mother of Kols who would never touch gold. They now consider that this was probably a mistake on her part and that Bhagawan does not mean that Kols should avoid its use. This taboo is not observed by most of this Rautiya women, who use gold if they can afford it.

In the course of our investigations it became apparent that other

¹ Russell and Hiralal, *Op. Cit.*, Vol. II, p. 250.

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and led him wherever he went. He always had a bow and some arrows with him, as he was also a mighty shooter. As they were out begging they met a Brahmin female beggar who had just been to Gaura, the Ahir village, and had learned of the slaughter of the Kols. When the blind Devasi heard of this he said to his sister: "Sister, why should we live any longer when all our friends are dead? Let us now go to Gaura village and as we approach it tell me carefully where the two Ahir leaders are sitting so that I may shoot them." When they were within a mile of the village she spied them standing before the village and ready to give battle. The two halted and the sister carefully observed all that was going on. At last the two brothers turned their faces toward the blind archer and his sister. She told him that all was ready and handed him two arrows and then set his face toward the brothers. His aim was so exact that he shot the arrows right into the eyes of the two brothers and both fell down dead. Devasi's strength was so great that the bow almost broke when it was bent. The Ahirs were astounded at this mighty feat and wondered who did this. In their estimation Devasi was a mighty Kol and in terror they deserted the village. The blind Kol and his sister then took possession of the village and drove the 360 head of cattle therein back to their own village. They found some children whom they brought along, and when they grew up they intermarried with the Kols and the offspring of this union were called Thakuriyas.

The last part of the story does not seem to fit into the tale as a whole and the Ahir story may refer to some event other than that of the formation of the Thakuriyas. There is a section of the Ahirs called Thakurs and there may be some connection at this point. Russell and Hiralal also cite the belief that the Abhiras, the ancestors in part of the modern Ahirs, came into India from Central Asia about the time of Christ. To-day they are a much mixed race.

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It was ascertained that the Thakuriyas do not have the Rautiya taboo against the horse; that they can make mattresses and can even sit on those made by Kathariyas, and that they have no feeling against the use of gold as ornaments. In fact it is believed that a Thakuriya cannot carry out a wedding without the use of gold and that the parents of the bride should at least see some gold about the bridegroom's neck. If the bride can also wear it, so much the better.

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One informant said that Thakuriya men occasionally eat chicken and pork, but that their women-folk never eat them. They do not object to eating with other *kurhis*, and while they cannot take Rautiya girls in marriage, they can marry their daughters to them.

564 or quilt which they make from their own worn-out clothes or even
513 from the cast-off clothes of others. These quilts and mattresses are
used in place of blankets and other forms of bedding usually found in
[784] villages, and present a ragged sight when taken out in the sun to air.
[554] The Rautiya Kols have a taboo for the Kathariya mattress. Rautiya
Kols generally despise this *kurhi* because they do menial work, but this
cannot be the main reason.

114 All the evidence that we were able to collect indicates that
513 Russell and Hiralal are incorrect in their conclusions regarding the
564 Kathariyas having the mattress as their totem. They say: "A
member of this sept (Katharia) must never have a mattress in
his house nor wear clothes sewn in cross-pieces as mattresses
are sewn. The word *kathri* should never be mentioned before him as
he thinks some great misfortune would thereby happen to his family,
but this belief is falling into abeyance."¹ The actual facts which we
have carefully checked seem to be the exact opposite.

564 8. *Khairwar*. This is probably the same as a group in Chota
Nagpur known under the slightly different name of Kharias. In the
year 1937 Sarat Chandra Roy² published in two volumes a complete
and comprehensive study of this important group. The Khairwars
in the Central Provinces seem to be a mixture of jungle tribes and are
often confused with the Gonds. Russell and Hiralal say that the most
probable derivation of the name is from the *khair* or catechu tree
(*Acacia catechu*) from which catechu, "any one of the several dry,
earthy, or resinlike, astringent substances got from certain tropical
plants and used in tanning and dyeing" is manufactured. We were
[314] given this same information: this group is called Khairwars because
its members make *khair*. They are also said to be a low type of Kol
and this work is despised as a profession for now-a-days it is done
[554] only by primitive jungle dwellers. It is not unlikely that a group of
Kols at one time were active in preparing *khair* and so received this
name, but it is more probable that they are somehow related to the
Kharias of Chota Nagpur.

9. *Kulmangan*. This is another of the so-called lower types of
Kols, the name being derived from *mangna*, "to ask." It appears
[735] that during the time of birth, marriage, death, or special religious
functions, members of this *kurhi*, if such it may be called, make it a
practice to ask alms from Kols. On certain occasions they are said to
[534] play the *sarangi*—a one-stringed musical instrument. There is no

¹ Russell and Hiralal, *Op. Cit.*, Vol. III, p. 510, see also Vol. I, p. 91.
² *The Kharias*,

171 in the case of the Hill Kharias the clan organization is based on to-
614 temistic principles, there is still no exogamy connected with it.¹ Roy
remarks about another section of the Hill Kharias: "There is strong
evidence to indicate that this section of the tribe has probably lost its
clan organization as they have lost their aboriginal language, unless
it may be that they never evolved any such organization."² Other
Kharias, notably the Hill Kharias of Singhbhum and Manbhum dis-
tricts have recorded of them that "the division into exogamous clans
is recognized for the purpose of marriage."³

An examination of the clan organization of the Mundas, which
might quite readily be worked out from existing materials, would be
an interesting study. (From our study of the Kols of Central India it is
clear that they, like some of the Munda tribes noted above, have at
the present day no totemistic clan organization as the basis of their
social organization; exogamy is practically unknown, marriage being
regulated within the group and even sub-groups on the basis of genea-
logical relationships.) Fifty years ago Crooke wrote of the Kols of the
Southern United Provinces that they have "shed off the elaborate
system of totemistic septs which are found among the Mundas of
Bengal."⁴ On being asked questions dealing with a totem or an
emblem of a clan the Kols said that they have clans which they term
[564] *gots*. Asked further how these differed from *kurhis* the answer given
was that *gots* and *kurhis* are essentially the same. They said that on
a tribal basis exogamy is unknown amongst them, and that marriage
is always among the same *gots* or *kurhis*. There seems therefore to be
no difference at the present time in marriage regulations between
members of septs within the clan.

614 Some of the Kol *kurhis* which have no totems or clan emblems
564 may be called *gots* in the same sense as are the three *kurhis*: Kurhas,
Kathautiyas and Kathariyas, which apparently have as clan emblems
the earthen vessel, the wooden bowl and the mattress, respectively.⁵
No rites are observed in connection with these totems, either for
their multiplication or for their preservation. As far as could be
ascertained there are now no taboos in connection with them. In the
[784] cases of those who strictly use one or the other of these dishes the
[264] taking of food in the wrong kind of dish is taboo, that is, the Kurha
415 should eat off earthen vessels; yet there are Kurhas who do not observe

1 *Ibid.*, pp. 123, 124, 125 etc.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 122.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 125.

4 Crooke, W., *Tribes and Castes of the Northwest Provinces and Oudh*, Vol. III, Art. Kol.

5 See pages 38, 37, 44.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE : TOTEMISTIC ELEMENTS

53

this in a strict way, and when certain situations arise they may eat from a brass dish without offence. The same applies in the case of the Kathautiyas.

Russell and Hiralal¹ are supposed to have found traces of totemism among the Kols, but as previously noted it is clear that they have made a mistake in the case of the Kathariyas. They list certain "totemistic septs" in Mandla. They note that the Bargaiyan sept is really named after the village of Bargaon, that the sept connects its name with the bar or banyan tree (*Ficus indica*) and is said to revere it. This tree, however, is generally revered by Kols. Some of the sept's uses and taboos of the tree are mentioned in their article. The second sept, the Kathautia has the explanation that we have given, except it is reported that the sept reveres the tiger and keeps Bagheshwar Deo,² the tiger god, on a little platform on the veranda. We found no trace of this among the Kathautiyas interviewed. The third is the Kathariya sept, of which we have already spoken and where we believe the authors have gone astray. Fourthly, "The name of the Mudia or Mudrundia sept is said to mean shaven head, but they apparently revere the white *kumhra* or gourd, perhaps because it has some relation to the shaven head. They give the white gourd to a woman on the third day after she has borne a child, and her family do not eat this vegetable for three years."³ Fifthly, the Kumraya sept is said to revere the brown *kumhra*. Again, the Bhuwar sept is named after *bhu* or *bhumi* and its members must never sleep on cots, always on the ground. We found no trace of this belief. "Other septs are Nathunia, a nose ring; Karpatia, a kind of grass; and Binjhwar, from a tribe of that name."⁴ Russell and Hiralal do not state whether there are exogamic tendencies in connection with these septs or not. Totemism however, is a very complex phenomenon and differs widely even among the Mundas. There is apparently no single criterion: "Exogamy may or may not be coupled with the other features, totemistic taboos may be dissociated from a totemistic name for the group practising them; descent from the totem may or may not be postulated; and so forth."⁵ Lewis goes on to discuss Goldenweiser's and Fraser's theories of totemism and finds them inadequate to explain the totemistic phenomena. "Only confusion can result from envisaging what is disparate under a single head."⁶ The

1 Russell and Hiralal, *Op. Cit.*, Vol. III, p. 510, 511.

2 See index : Tiger.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 510.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 511.

5 Lewis, R. H., *Primitive Society*, p. 140.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 145.

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562 There are at least two other things which a Kol woman must
543 never do: she may not plough, nor climb up on the roof of a house.
784 Such matters are looked upon as serious breaches of custom and deserve
241 a penalty from the *panch*. Repeated enquiries elicited no recent
481 violations of these taboos, and there was no definite statement as to
what would be done in case they occurred. This latter taboo, however,
probably has its exceptions, as we knew of a Kol woman helping to
repair a roof on the mission house in Barela.

551 It is the rule that wives should never utter their husband's name
543 and the same is true of the husband who should never call his wife by
her name. They are addressed, rather, as the mother or father of the
children. For example if the child's name is Makkhi the husband will
address his wife as Makkhi's mother. There is another general pro-
[561] hibition to the effect that a woman should never speak the name of a
man older than herself; he should be addressed in some indirect way.

847 PARENTS AND CHILDREN. Kols say that children are Bhagawan's
858 gifts to them in answer to Sheori's prayer. Both sexes are welcome
842 in the home and there is no evidence that they favour one above the other.
Abortion is all but unknown and it is considered an evil thing to attempt
it. Apparently they know of no herb or plant growing in the jungle which
would cause it.

868 When children are old enough they are assigned tasks about the
house (there is no school besides this)—the girls learn cooking and other
household duties, gather wood and cow dung, while the boys help herd
goats or cattle, if any, or accompany their fathers to the fields where
they play about and help to bring back its produce or the wood cut in
the forest.

867 Almost no moral training, as such, is imparted, nor are the children
[861] severely punished when discipline is called for. A slap over the ear
is usually all that is attempted and more often than not this is adroitly
dodged. On the whole Kol parents are over indulgent with their
children. The sum of moral training was said to be "Don't steal, don't
lie, don't hurt anyone." When they were asked about the type of
religious instruction given to children they said: "We neither know,
nor can we tell." What children learn is largely by observation and
practice rather than by direct instruction. Among the more literate
people of Northern India moral teaching is given through the reading
of such literature as the Ramayana of Tulsī Dās. The Kols, though,
do not have even this, unless it so happens that a mendicant reads to
them, nevertheless it would not appear that their morals are any worse
than those who have considerable more light to guide them.

231 families in Kharara Ghat owned neither goats nor cattle. If cattle
422 are allowed to graze in the reserve forests the yearly payment is twelve annas for a bullock or a cow and six to eight annas for a goat. Young animals may graze without payment.

[778] In Panagar and Deori chickens are the common possession and there are but a few who have goats and cattle. At Benda, with 15 houses of Kols, there are six head of cattle and five goats. They cannot raise chickens there as they are plagued with cats, both domestic and from the jungle, which makes this impossible. Cats are regarded as sacred animals and are called "mothers" and may not be killed¹. The villages which are largely made up of people employed in industrial enterprises are found to have few animals. The more agricultural type of village has more cattle; but those who consider that they are here today and gone tomorrow do not have many animals. In the Kol mahallas about Jubbulpore the number of cattle is not large. Nowhere did we find a Kol who owned a horse. As was seen² they have a tradition that causes them to consider a horse something that should not be touched.

427 Taxes. Direct taxes are paid by very few Kols, for unless he actu-
651 ally owns his land the taxes are not paid directly. Those who take land on shares from the *malguzar* pay him one-third of the crop as his rent; in other cases a certain sum per *khandi* of seed sown is agreed upon. Some Kols about Barela told us they paid seven rupees for 1½ acres of *malguzari* land and another of the same place fourteen rupees for three acres of the same. The houses in which the Kols of Barela live are built on *malguzari* land. When a new house is put up they pay the *malguzar* two to three rupees depending on the size of the house and report that subsequently no further land rent is asked for. As long as the buildings are occupied by that man, and kept in good repair the land on which it stands can be controlled by the builder.
651 In other places there seems to be a yearly tax for houses; on the municipal land in Jubbulpore it was two rupees per house per year; at Garha, near the edge of Jubbulpore town limits the landowner asked one rupee per house per year. This amount seems to be the general rate or tax to *malguzars* for the houses or huts in which they live. In
[466] the industrial settlements they are given rent-free land on which they may erect their huts when they live on the property of the company employing them.

¹ See page 198.

² See pages 24-25; 210, 211.